7410 – Voice Mail (VM) Services - Best Practice Recommendations:

Guidelines for normal operations:
- Agencies with Voice Mail/Auto-attendants must leave a consistent, agency-defined greeting. This greeting must include instructions regarding the procedures to reach an operator or attendant, i.e., "Press zero". An attendant should always be available to respond to these calls. For example: "Hello. This is John Doe of the State Cabinet, I am unable to take your call at this time, you can press zero for an attendant or leave a message at the tone. I will return you call just as soon as possible. Thank you.
- Long agency names and obscure acronyms are to be avoided. Greetings and options should be short and to the point. All greetings must be businesslike. Avoid attempts at humor and seasonal greetings that some individuals might find offensive.
- When recording messages, speak slowly and distinctly, especially if you leave instructions or the phone number o someone else to call. Repeat the number at the conclusion of your message to give callers a chance to verify it.
- Unlimited message storage is impractical. Played and saved or un-played messages should normally not be stored for longer than fifteen days. Users should be aware, however, that message content may dictate longer retention if subject matter relates to an official transaction of agency business. Users with concerns about the records retention status of messages should consult with legal staff and/or records staff of the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives.
- Generally speaking, the higher the number of incoming citizen calls, the less desirable it is to have voice mail attached to that number. Receptionists/Operators, Help Desks and Call Centers should not have voice mail at all on citizen-accessed lines. Individuals in these groups can be provided private lines or extensions with voice mail to facilitate inter-office and person communications.
- Staff must be instructed in the proper use of Voice Mail vs. e-mail. VM is best used for short messages that do not require much more than a "Yes" or "No" answer. Lengthy messages, especially ones containing a lot of detail or numeric data should normally be sent by e-mail.